"Oranges and Lemons"

ORANGES AND LEMONS, a new and brilliantly colored novel by Mary C. E. Wemyss, takes its name by indirect implication from the English game twin to "London bridge is falling down" and well loved by all proper minded children. It is not a child's book, however, although they will enjoy it the more for that reason. Older people as well will find it good reading of a sane and clever sort. The story does not depend upon its plot for interest, but upon Miss Wemyss's ability to make people say and do amusing things. Like *The Professional Aunt* and *Impossible People*, her new book deals with a small group of English people among whom a child is prominently featured. There are often transparencies and tritenesses in the story, never in the characters. It is evident that the author loves her people far more than her book.

"Shan't-if-I-don't-want-to," as the five-year-old girl in the story is called, strikes us as being singularly unnatural as well as wilfully smart. She suffers from Miss Wemyss's determination to make her original at all cost. Still she fits very nicely into the general scheme, which is that of bringing a bachelor uncle and a maiden aunt, who dislike each other on principle without having met, into the arms of matrimony. Dina, Shan't's débutante sister, helps in the grim work, although it is Shan't who finally accomplishes it by getting thrown from a pony and making gestures of death. Like Ned in Mr. Leacock's satire on boys' books, who can't be boiled however long he may hang over foaming caldrons, because he is the hero, Shan't cannot die because she in the pièce de résistance. Without her we could not close the book in peace for fear the recalcitrant lovers might undo their bonds, Sibyl returning to her gardens and Marcus to his china collecting.

They are all nice human people with a clever turn of conversation except Shan't's, and she will be when she grows up. We do not go so far as to say that there aren't such children, fearing threatening letters from a score of children within the week telling us that they are Shan't to the life and offering proofs. It is never safe to say that people in books are unreal, as no one knows what real means anyway, and besides, if the story is amusing enough, what difference does it make? The only time when there should be any rub is when the author uses people, say women, whom we consider unreal, to prove a point. Miss Wemyss has better uses for her characters.

One opinion is advanced by means of Marcus which we should like to dispute, namely, that people's eyes grow smaller with the years and that a woman's eyes at forty have often shrunk noticeably. Brushing aside very tiny children, who frequently seem to be all eyes owing to surrounding smallness, we believe that eyes have a habit of growing larger, or seeming to, as the fulness of early youth departs from the face.

ORANGES AND LEMONS. By Mary C. E. Wemyss. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $1.50.

We are able to state unreservedly that the Señor Palavicini, who has just declined to be a candidate for President of Mexico is the same Señor Palavicini whose *La Democracia Victoriosa* has just been published by D. Appleton & Company.

Clemenceau, Cheer Leader for France

By N. P. D.

IT is easy to imagine Gladstone being called "old man" while he was still a baby; at least long before he was really the "grand old man" of England. But if Clemenceau lives, like his father before him, to be 90, the title of "ancient" will never properly fit him; he is too much the eternal boy.

The French call Clemenceau "Minister of Victory." Perhaps to Americans who read *Georges Clemenceau*, written by a rhapsodical Frenchman, Georges Lecomte (because rhapsody is needed to convey what Clemenceau means to the French people), he will appear as the cheer leader for France in the war with Germany: making the people unendingly sing the *Marseillaise;* animating them with his unconquerable spirit, inspiring them with his faith, communicating to them his own passionate devotion for his country and insisting upon every individual sacrifice that France might live.

One of the most popular cartoons of Bairnsfather (the "Old Bill" artist) during the war represented two soldiers in the trenches saying the Allies will win, if only "they"—the folks at home—will hold. It was Clemenceau's special role in the war to see that the French people "held"; and to give the poilus in the trenches encouragement, too, whether they needed it or not. M. Lecomte says that any day during the war if you went to the Palais Bourbon and found the Deputies in the dumps it was because Clemenceau was not there; on the contrary, if you went to the front and found the officers and men downhearted, it was because Clemenceau had not been around. Judging by the movies, he would seem always to have been at the front, quick stepping along in his little, old hat and big coat. But the truth is he was back and forth, always on hand where a little cheering seemed to be needed: in the Chamber after a reverse; at the front before a critical advance.

The war meant more to Clemenceau than to some others. "Si jeunesse savait!" Clemenceau knew. He was the first—and is the last—of the protesters against the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine. In the Assembly at Bordeaux he swore eternal fidelity to the stolen provinces. And it was because Clemenceau knew what war with Germany meant that he early made his profession of faith: "It is not enough to be heroes. We must be conquerors!" He directed all his moral and physical strength not only to the fighting but the winning of the war. Joffre turned back the Germans at the Marne. Foch directed, to ultimate triumph, the greatest mass movement of troops in military history. But Clemenceau was the moral leader, who cheered the French people and the French army to victory. M. Lecomte says: "Above all, he thinks only of the war. He carried it on with the wild energy of a man who does not want his country to die." The following picture of Clemenceau is striking:

"Behold him standing at the helm in the tempest! His sharp, calm eyes, so intensely black in his white face, watch through the deep, foaming waves for the reefs and mines. He is wet by the spray. But stanch under his little soft hat, with a turned down brim, a hat which has become the legend of the battlefield, he stands firm.

"Energetic, he tolerates only energy. Full of confidence, he wants others to be confident. Under the hardest blows of the sea, master of himself, humorous and sardonic, he raises a laugh by his picturesque jokes which hearten the struggling crew.

"Then suddenly what words he speaks, simply and profoundly human, of a controlled emotion, which bring tears to the hardest eye!"

The trenches adopted him. M. Lecomte says: "They know he is not afraid. He does not pose. He is cordial, spontaneous, bantering"—in a word, is himself the old poilu. In the same way, the crowd in the street adores him, "his energy, his activities, his picturesque good fellowship." As a matter of fact, Clemenceau seems to be all things to all men. When Mr. Hyndman, the British labor leader, wrote about him the other day he chose chiefly to see in his friend of many years the radical who, when he went to Paris, before he was 20, settled down in the Montmartre district (and later became Mayor of Montmartre) in order to be among and study at first hand the problems of the workers. Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son: "Never go down a coal mine. You can always say you have been below, and nobody can contradict you." Mr. Hyndman claimed for his friend that he has always gone down the coal mine. On the other hand, if Mr. Wilson should write a biography of Clemenceau he could (only he probably wouldn't) find in him a fellow idealist; while Lloyd George could choose the realist, and the Germans wouldn't be able to see anything but the Tiger.

II.

M. Lecomte, being president of the French Société des Gens de Lettres, emphasizes the more cultural side of Clemenceau's career, and dwells at length on his success as journalist and man of letters. M. Lecomte says that Parisians were never better informed on the art and literature of their time than while Clemenceau was publishing his paper, *La Justice*, which, although one of the most combative of political journals, was at the same time one of the most literary of its day. He gathered around him many brilliant young writers. Pichon was one of the editors. The chief political writer was Edouard Durrane—author of the famous caption, since revived by Forain the artist, "How fine the Republic was during the Empire!" Gustave Geoffroy was the literary critic, and in the files of *La Justice* will be found a procession of names famous in French art and letters—Monet, Rodin, Pissarro, Renoir, Carrière, Edmond de Goncourt, Barbey D'Aurevilly, Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Huysmans, Verlaine and, coming down to a modern of the moderns, the poet Albert Samain. Also while Clemenceau was editing his weekly pamphlet, *Le Bloc*, to which he himself was sole contributor, he first gave encouragement to many a young artist and writer. It was, of course, while he was writing political leaders for *L'Aurore* that he threw himself heart and mind into the Dreyfus affair, giving up his leader space for Zola's letter and himself supplying the caption "J'Accuse." Later, when his *L'Homme Libre* was to be censored, he quickly changed the name to *L'Homme Enchaîné*.

To sum it all up, M. Lecomte says Clemenceau "knows an enormous amount" and is one of the most widely cultured men in France. Brought up on the classics and the encyclopedists and English sociologists, he knows the best of the moderns and has had a share in making them. A play of Clemenceau's was produced in New York the past winter at the French Theatre. He has also written at least one novel, *Les plus forts*. When he was younger, M. Lecomte says he never missed a first night at the theatre.

III.

Now, of course, he has to go to bed early, since it is actually true that he rises at 3 o'clock in the morning! The first order of the day is to go to look under the door mat of his ground floor apartment in the Rue Franklin, where he has lived (let landlords do their worst) for twenty-five years, and get the despatches with which to begin his day's work. He sometimes arrives at the door mat before the messenger. He receives his first callers at 8 o'clock. He does not smoke, prohibition would have no terrors for him, he eats little and apparently sleeps less. He likes dogs and "collects" them, along with Chinese curios.

Born a Vendeean, of rugged ancestry (doctors for 300 years), M. Lecomte, like Mr. Hyndman, insists that Clemenceau is the true Parisian. Mr. Hyndman finds in him even a good deal of the Parisian gamin, "not at all averse to enjoying life at the cost of poking fun at other people and even at himself." Although Clemenceau can write, as his successful journalistic career proves, and he can be an orator when oratory is needed, M. Lecomte says he is more a man of action than words. "Verbosity even when brilliant wears him out. He hates the phrases that do not act." A favorite line in Clemenceau's speeches is "This is no time for words." This is what he said to the Germans the other day when he handed to them the peace treaty. But when the time comes to speak, neither works (nor his knees) fail him.

The least emotional of readers will be unable to read M. Lecomte's account of Armistice Day in Paris without a thrill. The cannon boomed, the throngs outside the Palais Bourbon sang the *Marseillaise*, and inside a sober and deeply stirred Clemenceau read the armistice terms. "When he held in his hands, duly signed, this armistice, which avenges our dead, which realizes our hopes, he whom no one had ever seen weep burst into tears." Socialist and priest, symbol of the *sacred union* that has carried France through the war, rushed to clasp the hands of Clemenceau; and Abbé Wetterlé, representative from Metz, up in a box had a little ovation all of his own. It was a great day for every one, but for a Frenchman, whose experiences with Germany extended back a half century, who had been continuously "protesting" since '71, it was truly the day of glory.

IV.

Again and again in M. Lecomte's analysis of Clemenceau we are reminded of our own Roosevelt—in the two men the same eternal boyishness, impetuosity, energy, picturesqueness, frankness, good fellowship, courage—whom no threat (nor assassin's bullet) could stop; in both the same frank and ardent nationalism and the same happy combination of man of letters and man of action. Clemenceau does not seem to have been the adventurer, in the way of travel, that Roosevelt was. A Parisian never sees the necessity to travel. But Clemenceau did, it is true, venture as far as America once, and, brave man that he is, taught French in a young ladies' seminary at Stamford, Conn. On the other hand, Mr. Roosevelt did not have the rapierlike wit and jovial good humor of Clemenceau. He said a good many severe things, for example, about the *Fourteen Points*, but never anything quite so witty and stinging as Clemenceau's quick: "Fourteen points! That's too many. The good Lord has only ten."

GEORGES CLEMENCEAU. By Georges Lecomte. D. Appleton & Co. $1.50.